GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3309
ANSWERED ON:06.12.2016
Polythene/Plastic Bags
Khanduri AVSM Maj. Gen. (Retd) Bhuwan Chandra

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether polythene/plastic bags being provided by retail stores to carry items purchased are banned in the country;
(b) if so, the reasons why polythene/ plastic bags are still being provided by retail stores to carry items;
(c) whether the Government is aware that organized sector retail stores are charging between Rs.1-10 per bag from consumers since June 2011 which otherwise were provided free of cost and if so, whether this levy for carry bags is being deposited to the Government to offset the damage caused by the plastic waste to Environment;
(d) if so, the total amount deposited during the last three years and the current year and the manner in which the Government has utilized this money; and
(e) the steps taken by the Government to penalize the retail stores which have not deposited the levy?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI ANIL MADHAV DAVE)

(a) & (b): The Government has comprehensively revised the earlier rules and notified the Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016. The Rules prohibit use of plastic carry bags of thickness less than 50 microns except carry bags made of compostable plastic. The Rules mandate for retailers or street vendors not to sell or provide commodities to consumer in carry bags or plastic sheet or multilayered packaging, which are not manufactured and labeled as per these Rules. Further, the shopkeepers or street vendors willing to provide plastic carry bags are required to register with local body after payment of plastic waste management fee notified by local bodies. The local body is required to utilize amount exclusively for the sustainability of the waste management system within their jurisdictions. The State Governments/ Union Territory Administrationshave been directed to ensure compliance to the Rules.
(c) to (e): The provision for explicit pricing as made in the earlier rules namely the Plastic Waste (Management and Handling) Rules, 2011 were to encourage reuse of carry bags and minimize plastic waste generation. There was no mandate under the earlier Rules to deposit the amount to the Government. This aspect has been addressed in the new rules as detailed in reply to parts (a) & (b) above.
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